

Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI)

STUDY OF THE U.S. INSTITUTES FOR STUDENT LEADERS

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-14-014

Office of Academic Exchange Programs

Study of the U.S. Branch

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the request for grant proposal (RFGP) issued by the **Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Study of the U.S. Branch**, for the **Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders**. Proposals must conform to the solicitation letter, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

The deadline for proposals is **Friday, January 3, 2014**. For further information regarding the solicitation, please contact Kevin Orchison in the Study of the U.S. Branch at: (202) 632-3339 or OrchisonKH@state.gov.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1.

STATEMENT OF WORK

- A. Recipient Responsibilities
- B. Department of State Responsibilities

SECTION 2.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- A. Overview
- B. Program Dates
- C. Program Administration
- D. Participants
- E. Academic Residency Component
- F. Educational Study Tour
- G. Logistical Considerations
- H. Fostering Mutual Understanding
- I. Alumni Outreach and Follow-on Activities

SECTION 3.

BUDGET

SECTION 4.

REVIEW PROCESS

SECTION 5.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- A. Proposal Contents
- B. Application Submission

SECTION 1.

STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Recipient Responsibilities:

1. Designing and overseeing a five-week academic program in the United States for undergraduate students from selected countries;
2. Providing programmatic and administrative oversight of the specified Study of the U.S. Institute;
3. Coordinating logistical and administrative arrangements for participants such as pre-departure information, airport pick-up and drop-off, domestic travel, oversight of the overall program and all participants, medical treatment, and the disbursement of program funds;
4. Conducting an evaluation program that links outcomes of the project to stated program goals and objectives;
5. Developing and implementing, in coordination with ECA, a media outreach effort to publicize the program;
6. Managing all Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and other funds for this activity, including submitting required quarterly and final financial reports to ECA;
7. Submitting weekly updates to ECA during main program activities, as well as required quarterly and final program reports by the established deadlines and other ad hoc reporting as appropriate;
8. Informing and consulting with ECA about any program or participant problems, emergencies, or other issues as well as the progress of necessary corrective action;
9. Providing participants with follow-on guidance and resources and facilitating continued interaction among participants and U.S. students after the conclusion of the Institute(s);

B. Department of State Responsibilities:

1. Providing advice and assistance to the recipients and Institute staff;
2. Coordinating all communications with participating U.S. embassies and consulates. U.S. embassies and consulates will recruit and nominate participants. The Study of the U.S. Branch will make final selections and forward the final list of participants to the recipient(s). The recipient(s) will not participate in the selection of participants;
3. Issuing participant DS-2019 forms for this program and issuing the participants' J-1 visas;
4. Enrolling the participants in an accident and sickness health benefits program for the duration of the Institutes and issuing health benefits identification cards for each participant. The program office will instruct the recipients how to access informational brochures and claim forms;
5. Arranging and purchasing international round trip travel for participants and disbursing international travel allowances prior to departure to the United States;
6. Monitoring the program through regular communication with the recipients and possibly one or more site visits; and,
7. Conducting a formal debriefing session with the participants during their Washington, D.C. visit.

SECTION 2.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Overview

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of two (2) five-week Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders on: Journalism and New Media and Local, State, and Federal Public Policymaking. Each program should be designed for groups of 20 students from selected countries from world regions as specified in the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP). Proposals should present an integrated and imaginatively designed academic residency and integrated educational travel program, as well as community service activities, leadership development, cultural activities, and robust opportunities to interact with a diverse group of Americans. The Institutes should focus on the particular theme while also illuminating the history and evolution of U.S. society, culture, and values.

All aspects of the program, including presentations and other class work, readings, writing assignments, leadership training, community service, and site visits should be integrated so as to illuminate the overall Institute theme, and contribute to the understanding of the United States. The conception and structure of the Institute programs are the responsibility of the recipient. It is essential that proposals provide a full, detailed, and comprehensive narrative describing how the applicant and/or host institutions will achieve the objectives of the Institute.

B. Program Dates

The Institutes will be five weeks in length and will correspond with the breaks in the academic calendar of the participants' home countries. Please refer to the RFGP for the suggested timelines for each Institute.

C. Program Administration

Proposals should discuss the applicant's capacity to successfully manage this international exchange program, including institutional strengths such as past projects, faculty, libraries, and relevant resources. Proposals should include a staffing pattern that details how staff will share responsibilities. The recipient must designate an **academic director** to be present throughout the program to ensure the integration of all aspects of the academic program. The academic director will plan and implement the program, oversee its day-to-day management, and monitor program participants. The academic director should address the group on a regular basis in order to ensure that topics, presentations, and activities are tied together and woven into "the bigger picture."

In addition, an **administrative director** or coordinator should oversee all program support services, including budgetary, logistical, and other administrative arrangements. Other staff may be designated as appropriate. Graduate student assistants may be employed to carry out clerical duties and to assist with the day-to-day concerns and needs of participants, but should not be the principal point of contact for participants'

administrative concerns.

All recipients are required to send at least the administrative director (but may also send the academic director) to a briefing in Washington, D.C. tentatively scheduled for mid-April 2014. These costs should be included in the applicant's budget.

D. Participants

Each Institute will host up to 20 participants. ECA determines the participating countries, in consultation with other elements of the Department of State. ECA reserves the right to amend or modify the list of participating countries should conditions change or if other countries are identified as priorities.

The participants will be highly motivated undergraduates from colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education, who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied, and may include sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, business, and other professional fields. Recruitment of participants will include historically underserved groups, ethnic minority communities, and disadvantaged groups. Every effort will be made to recruit participants who are from non-elite or underprivileged backgrounds, from both rural and urban sectors, and who have had little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside their home country. The Department of State will make every effort to select a balanced mix of male and female participants. All participants will be fluent in English.

E. Academic Residency Program

The Institute should include a four-week academic residency component. The academic residency component should be a specially designed and well-integrated seminar that imaginatively combines lectures, panels, seminar discussions, readings, debates, site visits, and regional travel into a coherent program.

Applicants must provide a comprehensive **narrative** describing the program objectives. There also should be **calendar or itinerary** of all program activities. The program description in the narrative and itinerary should be supported by a **bibliography** and a **syllabus** that indicates the subject of each class session and explains how assigned readings and other materials support the session. The readings should relate directly to the Institute theme.

The academic residency component of the program should:

- Be specially designed around one of the two themes listed in the RFGP and should contribute to a deeper understanding of the United States, while at the same time providing useful skills and concepts for future leaders. The program should not simply replicate an existing lecture course, survey, or seminar designed for American students.

- Consist of a carefully integrated series of lectures, panel presentations, seminar discussions, debates, individual and group classroom activities, and reading assignments.
- Be tailored for the particular group of foreign students and include a discussion of relevant issues facing their countries and region. Efforts should be made to encourage active student participation in the educational process. The design of classes should take into account that the participants may have little or no prior knowledge of the United States and varying degrees of experience in expressing their opinions.
- Expose participants to a variety of presenters representing diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and occupational fields on the topics and issues to be explored. In addition to host colleges or university faculty and professionals from the region where the Institute takes place (e.g., in government, media, religious and civic organizations), course presenters should include outstanding scholars and other professional experts from throughout the United States, as appropriate.
- Include time for discussion at each session and throughout the program to allow for questions and answers and for a collegial exchange of views among participants, presenters, and panelists.
- Include a bibliography of readings for the various program components. It should include at least one survey text or reader, as well as a number of interpretative readings directly related to the Institute themes.
- Include at least one leadership training session per week that should serve to both develop and enhance participants' leadership and collective problem-solving skills, and inspire participants to apply them. These workshops should be creative, highly interactive, and team-oriented. They should require input and contribution from all participants, and provide students with basic leadership skills. The recipient may decide to recruit qualified instructors for these sessions from other organizations.
- Include at least one hands-on volunteer activity per week with local community service organizations to provide the participants the opportunity to experience first-hand the U.S. tradition of grassroots approaches to solving community problems, as well as additional opportunities to meet and interact with diverse Americans outside an academic setting.
- Be intensive, yet leave sufficient free time for pursuing individual interests, socializing with fellow participants and U.S. students, exercising, and relaxing. The program schedule should include adequate time for reading and preparation of class assignments. Supervised cultural and weekend activities (such as group nights at the theater, concerts, sporting events, and city tours) are encouraged and should offer the students opportunities to experience the diversity of the United States, while fostering group cohesion.

F. Educational Study Tour

The educational travel program should:

- Be an integral part of the Institute that directly complements and reinforces the academic residency program.
- Be arranged and led by the academic director and principal Institute staff. All staff that will be working on this component as managers or escorts should be clearly identified in the proposal.
- Be approximately one week long, including a final three days in Washington, D.C. It should include a trip to at least one other region within the United States different from the host institution's region. The agenda for these educational visits should include an appropriate mix of professional-level meetings (local, state, and/or federal government offices, international organizations, NGOs, etc.), visits to cultural institutions, and recreational activities.
- Indicate the cities or other destinations to be visited, as well as the specific sites. Day trips or optional weekend excursions to various local and nearby locations, including historical sites, schools, churches, newspapers, etc., are encouraged. Proposals should explain how the site visits and presentations included in the educational travel program relate to the Institute's academic objectives and subject matter.

Please note: The Study of the U.S. Branch may request that the recipient modify the academic residency and/or educational travel program. Similarly, the recipient, in consultation with the Study of the U.S. Branch, may also wish to make program modifications.

G. Logistical Considerations

- **Housing and meal arrangements** are an important dimension of program planning and must be discussed in detail in the proposal. In general, participants should be housed on campus in university dorms or similar designated university housing. When feasible, institutions are encouraged to host participants with American roommates. Walking distance to daily classes should be taken into account. If possible, participants should have access to kitchen facilities, either in their own rooms or in a common room. A combination of a cash allowance for food, which will permit them to cook or eat at local restaurants, combined with a cafeteria meal plan, is strongly recommended. To the extent permitted by budget limitations, participants should receive up to the USG per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses at the various program locales. See <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem> for current USG per diem rates.
- **Pre-departure materials** should be available to participants via an institute website or email at least six weeks before the start of the program. For participants who do not have Internet access, your institution should make arrangements to send hard copies of these materials by express mail to the U.S. Embassy or directly to the participants, as appropriate. Program websites should be updated regularly to provide changes in the program schedule, readings, photos of institute activities, and other useful information.
- **An administrative orientation** to the United States and to the host campus for the participants should address administrative details of the program, identify campus and local resources, and provide general information that will facilitate the participants' adjustment to daily life in a new cultural environment. Important topics will be security, medical problems, and availability of foods to which participants are accustomed, or which meet specific dietary requirements.

- **An academic orientation** should provide participants with a concise overview of the program, including principal objectives and major themes. The academic director should also use this opportunity to discuss guidelines for class participation that encourage active participation by all class members, respect for the views of other participants, concise comments and questions that keep the students on-topic, and other ground rules that will promote effective class discussion throughout the program.
- **Opening and closing events** (e.g., luncheon, dinner or reception) should formally inaugurate the program, inviting interested college/university and community representatives and ECA staff.
- **Access to resources** should be arranged, including campus libraries, computer and internet facilities, local and national newspapers and periodicals, as well as radio and television. A formal orientation to library services should be conducted during the first week of the program, and computer training and technical support should be provided for those participants who require it.
- **Evaluations** should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that academic, administrative, and personal problems are acted upon promptly. At the conclusion of the Institute, a formal evaluation session should permit participants to comment on all aspects of the program.

Please note: All participants will be required to return to their home countries immediately upon the conclusion of the program. Travel to visit family or friends elsewhere in the United States will NOT be permitted *before, during, or after* the program, including on unscheduled weekends during the academic residency period. Family or friends may be permitted to visit the participants while the latter are in residence at the host institution, at the discretion of the recipient and in consultation with ECA, provided that such visits will not prove disruptive to the program. At no time will family or friends be permitted to accompany the participants during scheduled program activities, whether such activities are mandatory or optional. Institute staff should arrange to escort all participants to airports for their return travel, and to remain at the airport until the students have checked in and entered the security departure area.

H. Fostering Mutual Understanding

ECA's mission is to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations.

In order to promote this mission, the program should provide ample opportunities to attend informal and formal gatherings of ordinary Americans from a variety of ethnic, social, and professional backgrounds, as well as with U.S. college students. Programs should strive to include as many of the following program components as possible:

- A weekend-long home stay with a local family;
- A structured way for participants to present their country's history and culture to diverse groups of Americans;
- A peer system where international participants are paired with U.S. students for individualized recreational evening and weekend activities;
- Classes with U.S. students or accommodations with U.S. roommates, if possible;

- Informal group activities, between the participants and members of the local community; and
- To the extent possible, mentor relationships between participants and academically-appropriate host institution professors.

I. Alumni Outreach/Follow-on Activities

Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (with minimal ECA support) that ensures that ECA-supported programs are not isolated events. Proposed follow-on activities for alumni must reflect the goals and objectives of the program and must contribute to ECA's mission to foster mutual understanding among the people of other countries and the people of the United States. The proposal should include an outline of follow-on alumni programming (including a timeline), information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts, and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. Examples of successful past follow on activities include, but are not limited to, structured mentoring programs, small grant competitions, alumni reunions or workshops, monthly web discussions, reverse exchanges, cooperative publications by participants and their American peers, and distance learning opportunities for alumni. Applicants should incorporate the online communities on the International Exchange Alumni website (Alumni.State.Gov) into their alumni outreach plans.

Follow-on activities should be well developed, but also remain flexible enough to allow for changes based on the needs of the participants. Alumni activities should be financed using the line item budgeted for follow-on activities as well as significant cost-sharing by the applicant organization.

Please visit <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding/administering-grants-policies-and-resources/resources-program-administrators> and also refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

SECTION 3.

BUDGET

All budget guidelines must be followed. The budget should indicate any cost sharing in the form of in-kind or cash contributions to the program from sources other than the Department of State. See standard guidelines (PSI) in the Solicitation Package for information on cost sharing and the cost of audits.

A sample budget is provided as an excel document download as part of the application package for this solicitation. Please note there are two tabs in this document, the **Summary Budget** and the **Detailed Budget**. Applicants must complete both tabs. The sample budget includes an explanation of specific budget categories and line items. Unless otherwise indicated, each of the line items should appear in the proposed budget. You are urged to be as detailed and specific as possible, adding line items if needed.

Please be sure to include a **Summary Budget** on a separate page before the **Detailed Budget**. The Summary Budget should clearly indicate the number of program participants and provide an overall unit cost per participant, as well as a unit cost breakdown by program and administrative costs. A sample of this format is provided on the first tab of the sample budget. Please note, the summary budget includes estimated cost

projections for the option years of the grant. You are not required to provide a detailed budget for the option years until ECA decides to exercise the option year.

Following the Detailed Budget, please include a **Budget Narrative** that concisely explains how costs were calculated and the rationale for including them in the budget.

Applicants should attempt to maximize cost-sharing throughout the program by enlisting the support of the U.S. private sector, including foundations and corporations. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.

SECTION 4.

REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals are subject to compliance with Federal and ECA regulations and guidelines and forwarded to an ECA grant panel for advisory review. Your proposal also may be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with ECA's Grants Officer. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

Proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their responsiveness to the six criteria listed in this RFGP.

SECTION 5.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

A. Proposal Contents

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for you to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)
-

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist:

Online Forms

SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs

SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs"

Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

Program Narrative

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted

Detailed Budget (list allowable costs and any other program specific budget issues.)

Calendar of activities/itinerary, if applicable

Letters of endorsement

Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)

First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, “Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax,” must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

Please note: For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees) will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA’s FFATA reporting requirements.

Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

B. Application Submission

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Kevin Orchison at (202) 632-3339, ECA/A/E/USS; email: OrchisonKH@state.gov.